



MAY 2022

Ex ATHENA CASSINO
Ex BELONG 22.2

28TH ARMY INTER CORPS
CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS

GUNNER

#oneregiment

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GUNNER



MAY 2022

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Warrant Officer Class I (RASM) Richard Mealand Royal Artillery Sergeant Major

It has been an absolute pleasure to be your Royal Artillery Sergeant Major over the last two years and as my tenure comes to an end, I thought it only prudent to reflect on the last 24 months and what has been achieved. How can any reflection not mention the biggest pandemic that the world has had to deal with, COVID 19? I have been so proud to witness the Royal Regiment's response to the demands of what our country required in its hour of need; your commitment and professionalism was there for all to see. I know that this response will have come at a personal cost for many of you, but needless to say you all stepped up to the mark and did our Regiment and the Army proud. We had deployments in vaccine centres, testing units, hospitals and in some areas driving ambulances and tankers – I was so impressed with the drive and ambition you all showed during this unprecedented time, stepping up to the call and serving our country.

Let's not forget that the operations continued; the Gunners are routinely deployed on over ten operations both in the United Kingdom and overseas. Major deployments include Op CABRIT in Estonia and Poland as part of NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence (which is of so much greater importance following Russia's invasion of Ukraine); Op SHADER in Iraq where officers and soldiers from across the Royal Regiment are deployed in support of the UK's contribution to the US-led mission against Islamic State; Op NEWCOMBE where small teams are deployed with our S2 RPAS (MUAS) capability, but we are more widely employed across the globe as far and wide as Georgia, Qatar, Canada, Oman, Somalia, Kenya, South Sudan, the Balkans and Poland to name a few.

I have had the privilege during my tenure to visit so many units and establishments, seeing the incredible work that is happening, the innovative ways that our service personnel have adapted to continue to work and support training and operations – this has been truly inspiring. Virtual and in person visits have been greatly appreciated; they have supported me in being your voice and hopefully making a difference in some way to help and support your issues.

With the release of the Integrated Review, there are challenges ahead across the Royal Regiment, but I can now say with real confidence that your work ethic, professionalism, and drive will ensure we get to the end state we need. We will get there together with a combined goal, reinforcing the importance of being a 'Gunner' and embracing the challenges that the future holds for us all.

I thank you for your support over the last two years and the support you have all afforded me. I hope you will all join me in wishing WO1 Len Sanders all the very best as he now takes the reins of this most prestigious position – one in which I know he will excel.



Heroism of a WW2 Gunner Officer

Just five months into taking command of a Battery, and at the age of 27, Major Penrose would find himself fighting for his life against the fanatical Waffen-SS troops of the Hitlerjugend 12th Panzer Division. For his heroism, he would be awarded a Military Cross. His story, however, would remain hidden until, by chance, his sword came into the possession of Major Stokes MBE during build-up training for Public Duties in late 2021.

It was during Operation JUPITER, one of the many breakout operations conducted during the Normandy campaign that would see Major Penrose's Battery (217 Battery, 112th Field Regiment) in support of 7th Bn The Hampshire Regiment for their attack on Maltot. Planned as a culmination of three assaults by successive Battalions, the intent had been to wrestle control of key positions away from the Germans. Maltot was crucial to securing freedom of movement through the region for follow-on forces coming from the allies' tentative foothold in Normandy.

Having had the previous two assaults succeed in securing their objectives, the Hampshire's and Major Penrose were content that their plan would succeed. Instead, they were walking into an ambush. The German forces allowed the allies to advance into their objective unopposed, and it was only after the infantry CO had radioed back to HQ informing them that he had secured his objective was the ambush sprung. Tanks of the 102nd SS Heavy Panzer Regiment quickly knocked out several Allied tanks advancing in support, forcing the remaining tanks to withdraw, leaving the infantry unsupported. During this moment in the battle, Major Penrose found himself pinned down alongside the CO.

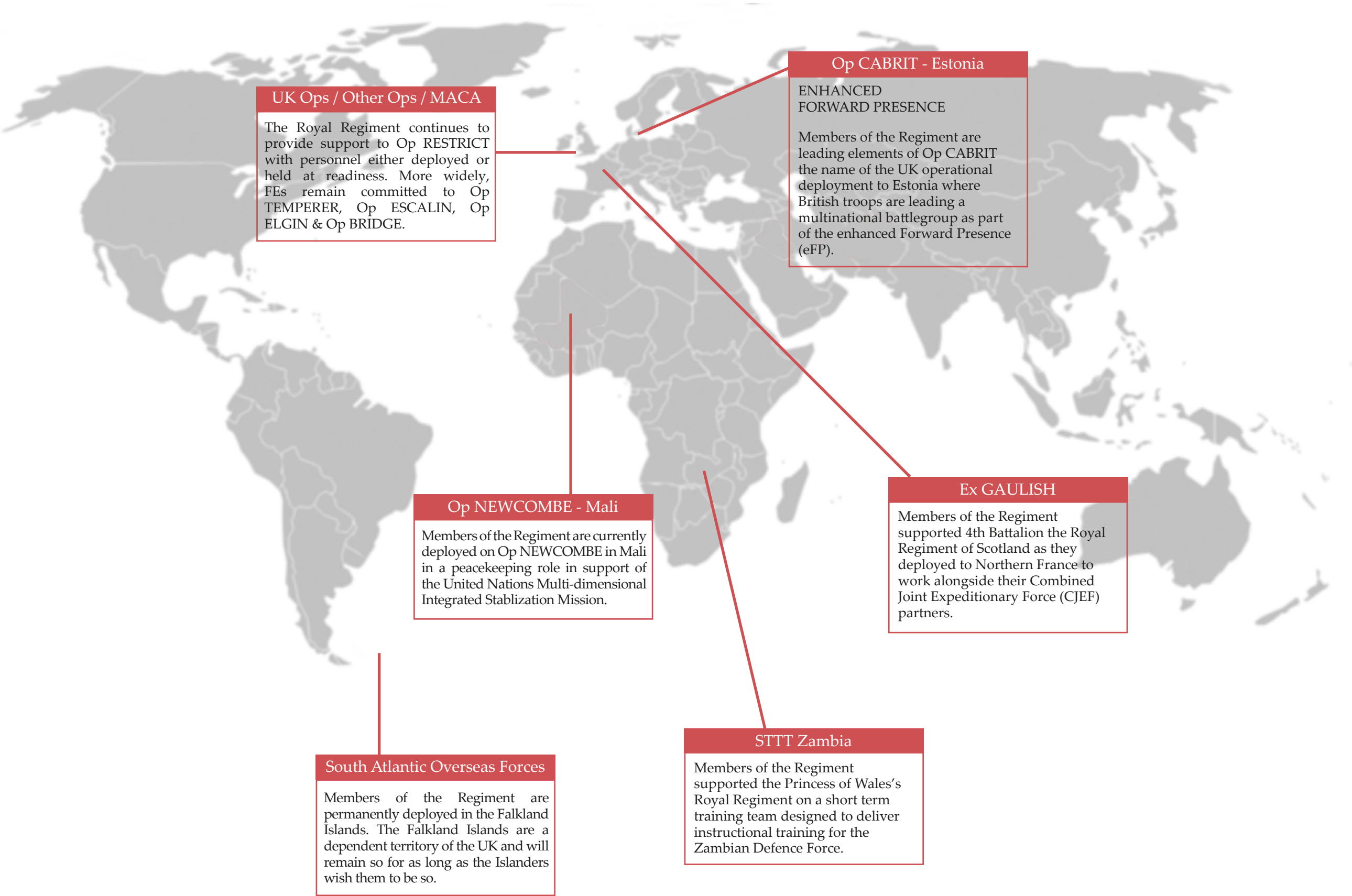
With the CO's vehicle destroyed, and both men injured, Major Penrose took command of the situation to repel the Waffen-SS's counterattack. Realising how tenuous their position was, he requested a divisional fire mission; but was denied as HQ was still under the impression the objective had already been taken. Calling back a second time, he was finally granted his fire mission. Still wounded from fragmentation and MG fire from the initial contact, he adjusted fire against a series of counterattacks until his wounds prevented him from using his radio, and he handed over command to another Officer.

Unable to continue to direct fire but determined to fight on, Major Penrose took command of the Battalions Bren Gunners and engaged the enemy in close combat. Still wounded to the left arm and right hand, he refused medical attention until the battle was won. For his actions that day, he was awarded the Military Cross. Medically evacuated, he would rejoin his Battery just in time for Operation MARKET GARDEN. Surviving the war, Major Penrose stayed in the army, retiring as a Major General with an OBE for his services in Malaya and his MC for valour in Normandy.

The General's bravery was rediscovered after his engraved sword was issued from the loan pool to Major Ian Stokes MBE RA, the Battery Commander of 93 (Le Cateau) Battery acting as Captain of the Queen's guard for Public Duties. Further investigation discovered that the General's son-in-law served in 93 (Le Cateau) Battery as a Troop Commander in the 1980s. Like an act of fate, the BC felt compelled to request that the sword be relocated and retired to the Officers Mess 5th Regiment Royal Artillery with his citation. A fitting place for the next generation of Gunner Officers to safeguard such a valuable piece of our Gunner history.

Major General J H Penrose OBE MC

The Gunners are currently engaged on over 10 overseas operations with formed units and individual augmentees deployed across the globe.





Artillery troops put their stamp on innovation



SUBURBAN streets are not the traditional home of heavy ordnance but that could change thanks to the Royal Artillery's newly-formed innovation and experimentation team – 34 (Seringapatam) Battery.

The 14th Regiment outfit used to be responsible solely for training support. But now, thanks to the Future Soldier initiative, it is also charged with shaping the way the artillery will fight in the years ahead.

As a result, some major rethinks of techniques, tactics and procedures are taking place.

"The nature of warfare has become asymmetric – there is no defined front line with guns positioned at a set distance anymore," says Battery Commander Maj Glyn Forster-Haig. "That means the speed with which we can fire and shift location, while remaining hidden and not engaged by the enemy, is more vital than ever.

"We've been assessing splitting light gun troops in half and operating them like a soldier might do when providing a colleague with covering fire. That makes them more

manoeuvrable and harder to find.

"It also means the crews have to fire twice as fast to provide the same effect, so obviously they'll need to be fit enough to do the job.

"But this is all part of our new role – to look at how we could use current assets to be more effective on operations."

With the unit drawing its manpower from across the Royal Artillery on two-to three-year postings, 34 Bty has quickly become a melting pot of ideas.

The most promising ones are stress tested and put forward for alterations to tactics and doctrine across the regiments.

One current priority is exploring how to operate light guns and AS90s to maximum effect in urban areas.

"For a long time we've trained mostly in the rural environment," explains Maj Forster-Haig. "Yet every indicator is now telling us that future battlefields will be congested, contested, connected, urban or an urban-rural mix."

"However, for guns, which like space and the freedom to move, these areas carry a very



high threat. We haven't perfected operating there yet so that's what we're leading on at the moment."



The challenges in managing towed 105mm howitzers and the AS90 leviathan, with its huge 155mm gun and noisy V8 diesel engine, in built-up areas with anything resembling a stealthy profile are immense. But being as discreet as possible really matters.

"One priority for us is understanding how we can protect our assets," adds the officer. "It's difficult to physically conceal a gun in an urban environment or disguise yourself against an enemy's wide array of sensors."

"We're looking at how we can use ISO containers, for example, to move about unnoticed, and how effective concrete-look tarpaulin covers or thermal cam nets are."

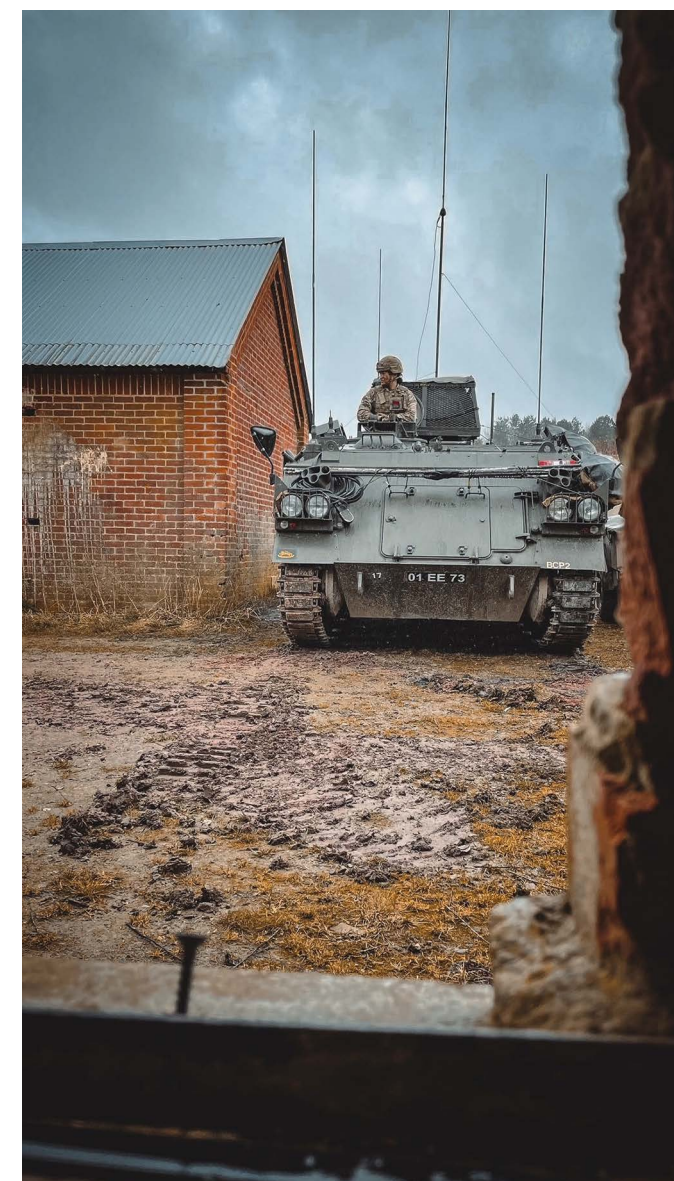
"During recent trials in locations such as Imber Village on Salisbury Plain we've been

assessing how to move and hide light guns and AS90s, and in the near future we'll be practising firing out of urban areas too."

With intricate city streets slowing down a gun battery's fire and manoeuvre tactics, the issue of communication speed has been high on the battery's agenda.

"We have been testing digital fires frequently because we are still largely dependent on voice," Sgt Marin Redhead (RA).

"It can take around 20 seconds to use the radio to communicate a mission, but that's reduced to a fraction of a second when we use data."



"The AS90 already has the tech installed for it but it's not used often enough. The light gun, meanwhile, will get data comms functionality



in the next few months so it's important we develop the procedures now and be really forward thinking in that area."

The electronic footprint of a weapon system is also a point of vulnerability – and this is another area where data systems come into their own.

"In reality, all artillery needs to do to be more lethal is to be around longer," explains Maj Forster-Haig. "With near-peer opponents the major threat is counter-battery fires."

"As soon as we launch we'll be unmasked, but even before that happens turning on a radio is like putting a huge spotlight on yourself."

"If you're using voice comms you are turning that light on for a protracted period, but data systems allow us to send packets of information in a blink, and that information can be relayed from the observers directly to command posts at the gun line and on to the guns themselves."

The personnel of 34 Bty are already using the knowledge and insight they've gained through their innovation work to support experimentation and help develop new platforms.

One of those is the successor to the AS90, which they are cooperating on with the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, Defence Equipment and Support and the Royal Artillery Trials and Development Unit.

"We are providing the scientists with the end-user viewpoint, so they can smell the cordite, feel the weight of the round, and talk to young gunners about how they operate these systems in real-time conditions," adds Maj Forster-Haig.

"It's vital our equipment is soldier-proofed – it must be made robust enough for the challenges that operations and training present."

"Often, talking to us is a dose of reality for the boffins and it's great to see a young soldier telling someone with lots of degrees and doctorates exactly how and why they should improve or change their kit.

"Our people have areas of expertise that scientists just cannot acquire but really need, so we have to have an environment where

ideas and challenge are welcomed, regardless of rank – and I think we've created that."



Maj Glyn Forster-Haig



BOXING CLEVER

Bright idea on urban cover

Our battery commander pushed us to come up with ideas about how to operate more stealthily in the urban landscape.

I immediately thought of the command post, which is always a major target, and how it could be disguised in an urban environment if we could fit the appropriate equipment into a vehicle common to the country we were in. The CP needs to move around innocuously, and the main problem with ours is that they are normally in Pinzgauers or Bulldogs. Even a civvy van with the large Bowman antenna can be a giveaway.

I have a background in comms so we decided to adapt a commercial van's regular radio aerial so it could be used instead – and it worked. The next stage is to look at how we can adapt a modular dismantled operations room – a mobile box of kit that was developed for Afghanistan and is mostly sitting in storage these days – and use that in our CPs.

It would be great to reutilise equipment that's lying around unused. The unit is working out the best way to fit it into virtually any commercial vehicle.

There are power considerations, of course, but potential solutions being explored include plugging in extra battery packs. The goal is that if we deployed abroad we could ship this equipment out in a small box, purchase a vehicle locally, and install the kit so we have a CP that blends into the local environment and is up and running very quickly."



Sgt Marin Redhead

TAPPING INTO APPS

Killer coding skills show promise

"I'd been interested in computers for ages and had already started teaching myself coding when I realised an app could easily replace all the long-winded paperwork around the live firing of light guns.

This was back in 2020, but when 34 Bty turned into an experimentation and innovation unit my superiors really backed the project and gave me time to refine it.

Detailed firing records have to be logged for every gun because they require a major service after 750 live rounds and a re-barrel after 8,000. Barrel wear must also be measured regularly and logged. This all helps with planning and maximising training time.

I'm doing a presentation on my app to the commanding officers next month. It's reckoned it could cut 40 hours – or a standard working week – every year just from form filling for the firing sergeant alone.

I'm still developing it, but my aspiration is for the app to eventually link to James – the joint asset management and engineering solution – so the fitters can see the status of every gun at the touch of a button and plan their schedule accordingly."



Bdr Sam Smith



Exercise ATHENA CASSINO



Allied Cemetery at Monte Cassino

Ex ATHENA CASSINO saw the seniors and officers of 47th Regiment travel to Monte Cassino, Italy. This was to better understand the trials and tribulations of the Allies that fought through the South of Italy to Rome during World War II. The mountainous region of Cassino was a defensive paradise for the German forces, with views of boggy open terrain that stretched for miles, allowing Forward Observation Officers to call in devastating artillery fire on the Allies. The history of Monte Cassino was brought to life by the subject matter expert and tour guide, Lt Col (Retd) Frank de Planta Wildenberg, who had just passed his double centurion of conducting the historic study we were on.

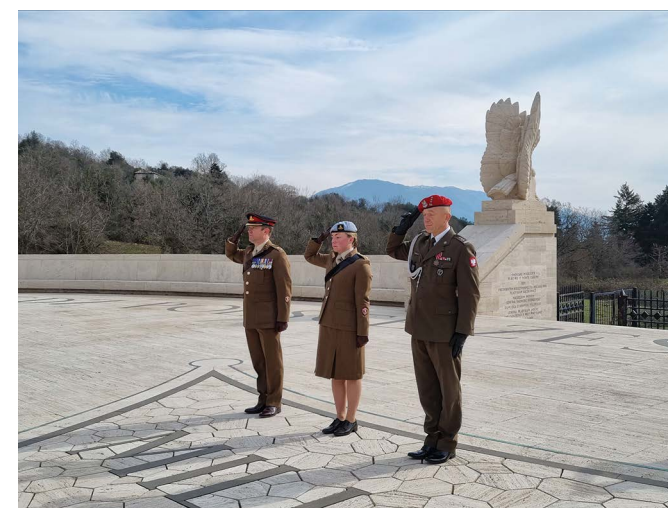
We stayed at the Hotel Rocca and added our Regimental plaque to the extensive collection that the hotel has accumulated from other Army units wanting to learn about the history. Besides learning about the extensive history of the Italian campaign, personnel also enjoyed the stunning views from the Benedictine monastery

at the top of Monte Cassino. On the way down the mountain, the Regiment carried out a birds-eye Tactical Exercise Without Troops (TEWT) to attempt to discuss the setting up of Take off and Landing sites, as well as tactically flying Watchkeeper in the region, using the historical past as a context to bring relevant lessons to the modern day.

Throughout, personnel learnt about key battles including: the crossing of the Rapido river, carried out by the Allies under fire from dug in positions of German forces and the battle for Point 593, a position on a mountain that provided perfect views of any activity occurring in the surrounding valleys. This battle was particularly pertinent to the Regiment as 10 (Assaye) Battery were the supporting Artillery unit for II Polish Corps, who finally took Point 593. 10 (Assaye) Battery still wear the Syrena (the mermaid of Warsaw) badge on their service dress today in memory of this action. Lt Lucy Swiggs of 10 Battery and Lt Col Tim Ventham (former BC of 10



Bty) paid homage to the occasion by conducting a wreath laying ceremony with the current Defence Attaché of Poland at the Polish war graves in Monte Cassino. The occasion has rekindled a relationship between the Polish and the Regiment for years to come. Our group also visited the German and Commonwealth War graves which were breathtakingly beautiful as well as a sombre reminder of the casualties of war.



Lt Col T Ventham and Lt Lucy Swiggs lay a wreath with the Polish Defence Attaché in honour of the Battle for Point 593

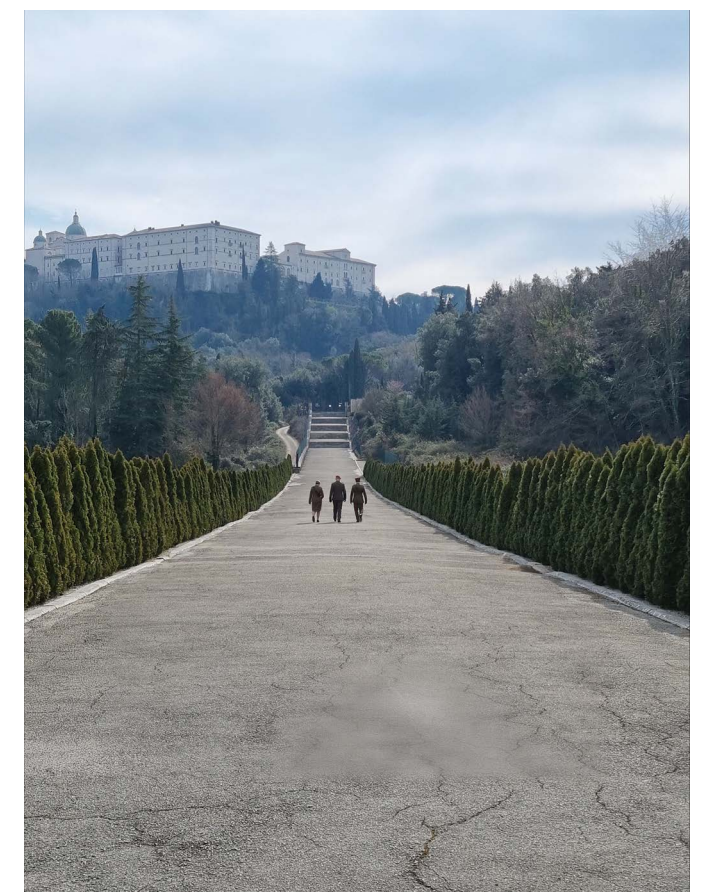
Importantly, the exercise learnt about leadership, initiative and exploiting opportunities. For instance, the poorly planned crossing of the Rapido river by the 36th US Infantry Division. A lack of security for the Allies resulted in 1400 soldiers' deaths. The orders given by Gen M Clark were investigated by congress for causing such devastation. Additionally, the exercise learned about the Hitler Line, a defensive line of enemy troops that were the final obstacle between the Allies and Rome. Maj Gen Walker informed Gen Clark that he found a break in the Hitler Line and suggested the Allies could break the line without casualties, yet Clark ignored him. It was Walker's decision to go against Clark's orders and advance through the gap, that inevitably gave the Allies the advantage they were seeking.

Furthermore, the lessons surrounding the importance of surprise and stealth in warfare were illustrated through engineering and

logistical masterpieces that helped win the campaign. Such as the Route Inferno and Hove dump, a tactically hidden supply route and depot that was used to distribute supplies to the Allies, and the Cavendish Road, which was blasted into the side of the mountain and built in a mere eleven days. Both within range and under the noses of the German forces.

Conclusively, Ex ATHENA CASSINO taught many lessons, not least that detailed and well-planned staff work is not a formality, but a necessity. Success is often achieved by planning detailed recesses of the ground and understanding the full picture. Looking at present day, Tactical Remotely Piloted Air Systems (RPAS) can be useful to inform such purposes. Advances in technology aimed at increasing situational awareness across the battlefield suggests that the Watchkeeper RPAS and those who fly it offer a battle winning platform for conflicts of today and the future.

by 2Lt Rob Simpson
43 Battery



Walk up to Monte Cassino



Exercise BELONG 22.2



ITT Gunners receive their section level orders

24 (Irish) Battery continue to deliver optimised technical, tactical and Gunner orientated training to the future soldiers of the Royal Artillery.

It has been a turbulent year for 14 RA, as we emerge from the training restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic. On more than one occasion, 24 (Irish) Battery have had to rewrite the way in which Initial Trade Training (ITT) is conducted, whilst maintaining the primary focus of delivering technically ready Gunners. Despite the challenges, over the last 12 months 257 new Gunners have been trained and delivered to the Field Army. 24 Bty is now realigning to practical instruction with a focus on soldiering to foster a sense of belonging. Ex BELONG is the result of this realignment, consisting of several aspects designed to challenge the recruits, prepare them for the Field Army and strengthen the relationships they have with one another. The exercise is broken down into three key areas: BCS, the 'BELONG' syllabus and Regimental education.

Battlecraft Syllabus

The BCS element of Ex BELONG is aimed at improving the recruits' basic soldiering and

tests the recruits on the skills that they learnt throughout their time in Basic Training, whilst also providing opportunities for the intake to build relationships with one another. For the permanent staff (PS) it is a fantastic first look at the latest batch of young soldiers beginning their journey in the Royal Regiment and allows those with natural leadership and command presence to stand up to the plate and take on command roles.

Conducted over four days, the exercise pushed the recruits through a series of day and night serials. The serials included personal administration, occupation of a platoon harbour, the six section battle drills, a close target recce and a deliberate ambush. The exercise benefits from PS with a wide-ranging knowledge base and experience; utilising the Battery's highly qualified instructors ensures that the trainees gain from the most up to date knowledge and equips them with a solid foundation on which to build as they progress into the Field Army.

Belong Syllabus

The core of the BELONG syllabus focuses on the preparation and integration of recruits into regular military life. The training includes



a series of briefs discussing the individual Regiments, Royal Artillery History, the reporting process, Battery life, duties, guard, health, nutrition and mental resilience. Whilst mental resilience is a key attribute for any aspiring soldier, this topic was of particular use for those trainees wishing to undertake one of the Army's arduous courses.

Regimental Heritage

Regimental history is an essential element of learning and training for the ITT Gunners, aiding their understanding of the history of the Royal Regiment and the institution they have chosen to join. It is achieved through lessons, trainee-led presentations and a visit to London. The presentations focused on the Regiment's contribution during the World War I and II, the Falklands War and most recently, the Iraq and Afghanistan campaigns. This was an area that was clearly of great interest to the recruits and proved to be a valuable learning experience.

The Heritage Day in London took the recruits to the Tower of London and the Imperial War Museum before a well-earned evening meal and round of mini golf. The focus remained on teambuilding and developing professional relationships, which were cemented during the social event on the final day.

What's Next?

With the next intake of recruits arriving imminently, Ex BELONG will likely become a standard feature within their timeline. As ITT breaks away from COVID-19 we'll see the move straight back to hands-on practical learning. The pace of life in the Battery will be sustained as we continue to support events and exercises across the Gunners, whilst adding depth to the ITT experience through battlefield studies, Ex BELONG and social events.

by Lt Calvin Wright RA
Troop Commander
C (Manorbier) Troop
24 (Irish) Battery
14th Regiment Royal Artillery



Extracting a casualty post section attack



Norway Annual Winter Deployment - Training in the “High North”



7 (Sphinx) Battery on position, Setermeon Ranges

7 (Sphinx) Commando Battery Royal Artillery deployed to Norway for the now well-established annual Winter Deployment as part of the United Kingdom's refocused efforts on training in the “High North” – an area which includes the Arctic Circle and more southerly territories and waters around Scotland and Northern Europe. In light of recent developments in the European strategic picture, a focus on building long term co-operation with our Norwegian partners and strengthening our own capabilities in the Cold Weather Environment (CWE) seems both timely and relevant.

After arriving at Haralvdollen camp near Bardufoss, the Battery extended and refreshed its credentials as a sub-unit qualified to operate in the CWE, with ranks undertaking the Cold Weather Survival Course (CWSC), Cold Weather Warfare Course (CWWC) and Cold Weather Operators Training Course (CWOT) over an extended period. Survival evolutions, icebreaker drills, ski training

and tactical actions were all covered as individuals got to grips with administrating themselves and operating efficiently in an arduous environment.

The Battery then moved into a Special to Arms (STA) training package which, spread over a period of 10 days, included TQCC, Fire Planning, Helicopter Observer and MANTIS Communications enabled mission sets. Following this, we engaged in Direct Fire serials and a short tactical evolution testing the Battery's defence of the gun position. During this period the Battery was delighted to welcome various distinguished visitors, including the RA Colonel, 29 Commando's Honorary Regimental Colonel, RASM and BC 21 Battery, 32 Regiment RA. Firing in support of 148 (Meiktila) Battery's FST Commanders, 7 Battery have once again established their live firing proficiency in the CWE and set conditions to develop this ability with further training throughout the year.

Upon completion, the Battery was released



for 3 days of Operational Stand Down (OSD). Some took advantage of the local slopes whilst others spent the weekend in Tromsø, enjoying some fine Norwegian hospitality; one adventurous soldier made it as far afield as Copenhagen. A week of final administration and completion of the CWWC followed, culminating in a cross-country race on the Setermoen course - a strong effort from all ranks involved. Recovering to the UK in stages, the Battery prepares to consolidate its success in Norway in the coming months.

We now look ahead to Op ACHILLEAN, a planned deployment to the Mediterranean as part of Littoral Response Group (North) to conduct partnered engagement and Combat Enhancement/Force Integration Training. As part of the UK Commando Force, our focus during this period is likely to be the development of

the Littoral Strike (LitS) priorities as well as the integration of Joint Fires and ISTAR capabilities; in short, we will continue to demonstrate our dynamism and utility as 3 Commando Brigade evolves to meet the challenges of the future operating environment. From the High North to the Mediterranean, 7 (Sphinx) Cdo Bty RA is always looking for the next challenge, taking lessons learned from the past and applying them with diligence and humility as we move forwards; this is what it means to be a Commando Gunner.

by Lt James Kingston RA
7 (Sphinx) Cdo Bty
29 Cdo Regt RA



Cold Weather Warfare Course, on the Survival phase



Winter deployment 2022



The CP BV setting up at night during the STA phase

At around -12° the moustache on the top lip of a Commando Gunner starts to freeze. At about -20° the calories required to maintain your body heat exceeds 7,000.

If jumping into a frozen lake as the culmination of our survival element of the Cold Weather Warfare Course sounds a little Bear Grylls, you'd be exactly right. He has joined 8 Alma Commando Battery and the rest of Littoral Response Group (South) (LRG(S)) in Norway as we exercised one of the key Commando Principles; the ability to operate in any environment. The -28° we experienced as we scrambled from the ice using the prescribed ski pole method, rolled in the snow to apparently dry off, then shuffled over to a table for a rather large tot of rum in the name of Her Majesty, was all in stark contrast to the 40° of the Mojavi desert we had been operating in only 2 months prior.

A deployment in Norway starts in early January when the sun does not rise beyond the horizon, living in long periods of twilight. 8 (Alma)

Commando Battery started our time here with the Cold Weather Warfare Course. An infamous course designed to equip personnel with the requisite skills to operate in the Arctic. With Royal Marine Mountain Leaders at the helm such skills are not earned lightly. Split into three parts we were taught how to survive; to build shelter by piling up snow then caving out the middle to make a "quinzhee" (i.e. a snow hole), and to move on "Pusser's Planks" (i.e. telemark skis) whilst towing sleds or pulk filled with team stores. We went down slopes, up countless hills, and cross country. This phase finished with the cross-country ski race. Finally, we learned to fight, and to operate tactically in the harsh Norwegian landscape. The phase is the culmination of all the skills learned so far, with the addition of firing positions whilst skiing, tactical harbours and skjoring.

Now equipped with the skills necessary to operate in this severe environment, it was soon time to exercise our Gunnery skills. The special-to-arm



phase saw 7 and 8 Battery guns firing in support of FSTs from 8 and 148 Batteries, Air OPs from the Wildcat of 847 NAS as well as multinational teams from the USMC, The Netherlands and Norway. We were also supported by the Norwegian Army's "Nils" Battery of K9 self-propelled 155mm artillery pieces, which we fired through the Regiment's ASCA node.

Following a well-deserved "run ashore" in Tromsø, we embarked on RFA Mounts Bay and re-joined the rest of the multinational flotilla out in the Fjords ready for Ex COLD RESPONSE - an exercise that has grabbed media attention and has been bolstered by the addition of the Royal Naval flagship HMS Prince of Wales. LRG(S) role was to

conduct clandestine raids from helicopter, landing craft and Offshore Raiding Craft boats; operating as the advance force for 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force, USMC.

The successful Winter Deployment saw 8 (Alma) Commando Battery returning to their roots whilst developing novel tactical procedures. Skills, knowledge and experience gained in this arduous environment will be carried forward as we support LRG (S) to operate all over the globe.

by Lt Brooks RA
Tp CMD6
8 (Alma) Cdo Bty
29 Cdo Regt RA



A Quinzhee Survival shelter with the glow of a candle on the survival phase of CWWC



Winter Deployment 22



The start of 2022 saw members of 148 Commando Forward Observation Battery deploy deep within the Arctic Circle to conduct 3 months specialist cold weather training in the wilds of Northern Norway. 148 Bty support the Surveillance and Reconnaissance Squadron Royal Marines (SRS) as the Joint Fires practitioners in UK Commando Force (UKCF) Formation Recce. We deliver FIND in the form of STA patrols able to conduct persistent surveillance for sustained period, UNDERSTAND through answering CCIRs and enabling the targeting cycle, and FIX in delivering lethal effect through Jt Fires and Battlespace Management (BM), whilst enabling non-lethal effect.

Norway was a fantastic opportunity for us to build on our core skills in a hugely challenging environment. The first month

saw the Bty split into 2 elements, one aligned to SRS, with the other conducting the Cold Weather Operations Training (CWOT) delivered by the Jaegers of the Norwegian STA Bty. Those aligned to SRS brushed focused on conducting key insertion and manoeuvre training, specifically skiing, Over Snow Recce Vehicle (OSRVs), and small boat training; concurrently they conducted LFTT packages, a very different proposition in the snow and on skis, and OP concentrations to understand how to better operate in the environment. The CWOT saw 4 weeks of extremely demanding cold weather training understanding Norwegian TTPs and learning from the experts. This culminated in a 2-week final exercise consisting of a 60km ski insertion over mountainous terrain to establish an OP.



The second month saw the Bty join the wider Region a Special to Arms (STA) phase to continue our education in Joint Fires and targeting in an extreme environment. The exercise saw the teams deploy into an OP screen alongside USMC colleagues from 2nd ANGLICO (Artillery and Naval Gunfire Liaison Integration and Coordination Organisation) and Norwegian colleagues from our partnered Artillery Battalion. It was a fantastic experience to coordinate the full gamut of Jt Fires, with Wildcat Avn, Norwegian F35's, 29 Cdo Lt guns and Norwegian K9 Howitzers all supporting the exercise, whilst also able to better integrate with our NATO allies and share best practices.

high North involving c.30 000 troops and a multitude of Naval, Air and Aviation assets. 148 Bty's role was to deliver STA patrols in support of SRS, within the Advanced Force remit of UKCF. The teams achieved huge success in shaping a complex A2AD battlefield to enable II Marine Expeditionary Force to conduct deliberate actions across the Area of Operations.

A huge success, both professionally and personally, Norway offers an unrivalled opportunity to hone key skills. It impresses the notion you are always fighting for survival on two fronts – the enemy and the weather – yet only one of these is an ongoing certainty: the unyielding arctic environment. It is a vital skillset to embrace, particularly in the current geopolitical climate, and ensure that UKCF retain the ability to deploy anywhere in the globe at short notice.

by LBdr Ashley Moyden
Op Ack 148 (Meiktila) STA Battery
29 Cdo Regt RA



The final month saw all the Battery deploy onto Ex COLD RESPONSE 22, a multi-national NATO exercise across the





Public Duties Reinforcement Company Jan - Mar 22



It was under a camnet on Otterburn Training Area in late November 2021 that 5th Regiment Royal Artillery was told that they were to perform Public Duties. 93 (Le Cateau) Battery was directed that they would take the lead in becoming the next Public Duties Reinforcement Company as of February 2022. You read that correctly; the Subunit had only eight weeks to prepare for one of the biggest tasks stowed upon 5th Regiment Royal Artillery. On hearing the words ENDEX, the Battery switched focus to Public Duties and began to dig deep into the operations orders of the Household Division.

The Regiment came together to put on a united front in support of 93 Battery and provided an array of ranks from K, P, 53 and Q Battery's to fulfil the ORBAT. Muscle memory got the bulk of the Guard through; however, some soldiers had never conducted rifle drill or even had a pass off parade due to the national pandemic. It is safe to say a fair amount of training was required to ensure everyone was ready for when the Short-Term Training Team (STTT) from the Household Division arrived! Thankfully, the professionals

took control, and as the weeks progressed, the standard of drill and turnout continued to rise.

The last Gunner unit to have had the honour of Public Duties was 26th Regiment Royal Artillery in 2018. Changing of the Guard dates to the reign of King Henry VII, who made the Royal Bodyguard a permanent fixture. The ceremony originally took place in the Palace of Whitehall and moved to St James' Palace in 1689. Queen Victoria moved the event from St James' to Buckingham Palace 1837, and to this day, the ceremony has not changed. The Queen's Presence governs the strength of the Guard; if the Sovereign's standard is flying, the number of sentries is increased. These duties were traditionally performed by the five Foot Guards Regiments. Nowadays, other regiments are invited to form reinforcement companies to allow these guard units to train.

The Fit for Role parade was the first nail-biting experience for our soldiers and is a means to illustrate our understanding and enactment of the parades and their intricacies, including a full-dress rehearsal. The Fit for Role parade takes place at Wellington



Barracks in front of the expert eyes of the Brigade Major and the Garrison Sergeant Major (GSM). It is safe to say every member came under the Eye of Sauron. Sgt Webb was commended for his "magnificent" moustache by the GSM, to the dismay of his fellow Non-Commissioned Officers! The Brigade Major, Lt Col Guy Stone LVO, has family ties to 5th Regiment; his father had commanded 5th Regiment Royal Artillery and was the driving force behind the formation of 4/73 (Sphinx) Battery. He concluded the parade with words of encouragement, declaring us Fit for the Role. This achievement was celebrated in true Gunner style that weekend.

On Monday 7th February 2022, Ascension Day was formally commemorated with the King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery firing a Gun Salute. However, unlike most years, this was also the start of the Platinum Jubilee celebrations and, by luck, the first Queen's Guard mount for the Battery. As the Guns of the Troop fired at noon, Gunners could be seen on Guard at Buckingham Palace, St James' Palace, and a few miles away at Her Majesty's Fortress and Tower of London. Not a bearskin insight for such a unique and historical event, it was truly a great day for the Royal Regiment.



The Battery eased its self into the battle rhythm of London District, performing duties at Buckingham and St James' Palaces, Windsor Castle and the Tower of London. When our soldiers were on their days off, they fully embraced the London experience, taking in many cultural visits to places such as; the Royal Hospital Chelsea, the Houses

of Parliament and the Imperial War Museum, to name a few. The Battery was also graciously hosted by their Former Battery Sergeant Major (Now RSM KTRHA), giving our soldiers a look back at our regimental heritage and a chance to experience a different side of life in the Royal Regiment.



Whilst performing duties at Windsor Castle, the Battery were able to show their support on International Women's Day with a strong female representation on Guard and the Regimental Colonel paying a visit. On several occasions during their tenure, the Windsor Castle Guard also earned high praise from HM The Queen, our Captain-General, being commended on their drill and smart bearing whilst on duty. The Officers on duty at Windsor were also fortunate enough to meet members of the Royal Family whilst on investiture duties.

The dismount of the Queen's Guard on Friday 11th March was the Battery's final parade in London. The Band of the Royal Regiment of Scotland played Auld Lang Syne as we returned to Wellington Barracks for the last time. As our paired band throughout this period, they worked tirelessly to support our busy schedule, providing musical support almost every day whilst we were in London. It was only fitting that they played their own traditional farewell on the last parade together.

With public duties complete, the Battery returned to Marne Barracks to re-org, relax and brag about their fantastic and rightly proud experience. Every soldier carrying themselves a bit taller, with the sense of accomplishment from a job well done.

by Lt Fitzgerald RA
PDRC



On Sunday 24th April the regimental family joined the In-Pensioners at the Royal Hospital Chelsea for Gunner Sunday.

The Royal Artillery Standard Bearers joined the In-Pensioners on parade where they were inspected by the Governor of the Royal Hospital Chelsea, Regimental Colonel and Royal Artillery Sergeant Major. Following the parade, Choral Matins as the Sunday Service was held in the Chapel and all the attendees were invited to the In-Pensioners Club for a curry lunch.

If you are a Gunner, past or present, Gunner Sunday is an opportunity to visit this very special residence. Gunner Sunday is planned for 16th April 2023.

Photo credit: Michael Patrick, Patch Photography





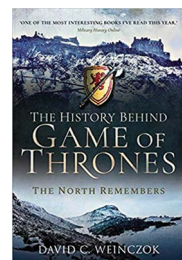
The closing date for all competitions in this month's edition is Monday 13 June 2022. The winners will be drawn at random and notified as soon as possible. Don't forget to fill out the form at the bottom of the page.

Easy Sudoku

3	5		9	8	7			
			5					
	2			1				5
7	6					2		
2		1				9		3
		3					6	7
9				5			7	
					4			
			7	2	8		9	1

The objective is to fill a 9x9 grid with digits so that each column, each row, and each of the nine 3x3 sub-grids that compose the grid contains all of the digits from 1 to 9. The puzzle setter provides a partially completed grid, which for a well-posed puzzle has a unique solution.

To win the history behind Game of Thrones the north remembers - all you have to do is fill out all your details and send it to us at Gunner Publications, RHQ RA, Artillery Barracks, Larkhill, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP4 8QT.



Wordsearch - missing word?

.....

Name:

Tel:

Email:

Address:

.....

.....

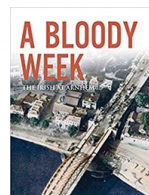
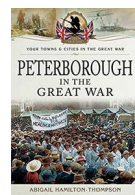
.....

The Gunner Wordsearch

F	U	E	P	E	E	T	S	T	F	O	R	C
I	G	G	A	L	K	E	U	L	E	R	X	A
R	R	D	P	H	A	G	G	I	S	E	W	N
I	A	I	I	F	N	F	P	Z	C	T	H	N
N	D	R	C	A	A	A	O	E	H	T	I	Y
G	E	R	K	B	T	N	R	D	S	G	S	E
R	F	O	L	E	R	G	T	G	I	L	K	C
I	E	P	I	R	A	I	I	E	N	E	Y	T
K	N	O	N	G	T	L	S	R	R	N	N	I
C	D	N	E	E	W	L	T	A	A	O	R	T
O	E	G	U	N	A	I	L	D	V	M	I	S
N	R	E	C	A	T	E	E	L	P	O	A	K
N	M	R	S	R	E	C	C	U	O	R	C	I
A	L	U	E	F	R	A	X	O	H	P	F	L
B	H	I	N	A	P	T	E	I	N	N	O	B

This month you are looking for words that are associated with scottish words, please find which word is not hidden in the grid. They can be found vertically, horizontally, diagonally and backwards. Good luck!

BANNOCK	CROFT	LOCH
BONNIE	GILLIE	PORRIDGE
CAIRN	GLEN	TARTAN
CANNY	HAGGIS	WHISKY



When news of the war first broke out in 1914, the citizens of Peterborough could not have been prepared for the changes that would occur over the next four years. This book takes a detailed look at Peterborough's involvement in the Great war from when it commenced in July 1914, to the Armistice in November 1918, covering in great detail its affect on the city and the every day lives of its people.

The Battle of Arnhem was a major World War II battle at the vanguard of the Allied Operation Market Garden, the dramatic but unsuccessful campaign fought by the British Army in the Netherlands from 17 to 25 September 1944. This was the first-time airborne troops were used by the Allies on such a scale, and the objective was a series of nine bridges that might have provided an Allied invasion route into Germany.

The True Value of Forces Pension Society Membership

As you would expect, many people join the Forces Pension Society for guidance from our Pensions Experts about their individual pension benefits. But a question I'm frequently asked, is why do Members remain Members for so many years? In this brief article, I will attempt to explain why - and the answer is embedded in our Vision statement:

to enhance Armed Forces Pension clarity for our Members and influence policy, now and for future generations.

Armed Forces Pensions are complex. Often seen primarily as a means of encouraging Service retention, they are now more appropriately designed to meet the needs of a diverse and more savvy generation. The very characteristics that make for outstanding servicemen and women also demand a pension that goes beyond meeting basic needs. Additionally, since April this year, all serving personnel will be members of AFPS 15, meaning there is a uniform pension platform that provides a springboard into civilian life or long-term assurance of a decent living standard.

The Forces Pension Society has been in the vanguard of this evolution, having championed Armed Forces Pensions for more than 75 years, acting as a pension watchdog for the entire military community.

Our Forces Pensions Consultants are always on hand to provide guidance tailored to Members' individual needs.

For current Members, there are significant decision points in every Service career. Some are predictable, such as the timing of Early Departure Payments and Resettlement grants; others less so, such as divorce (sadly not uncommon in our community), medical discharge or decisions relating to pension top-ups. For some, annual allowances and taxation charges require constant monitoring and planning. This is why our Forces Pensions Consultants are always on hand to provide guidance tailored to Members' individual needs.

Other reasons Members tell us they remain loyal are because they support our successful campaigning activities (such as Justice for Widows and the recent McCloud Case), our representation of their interests on the Public Sector and MoD Pension Boards, (where strength in numbers helps increase our influence), and we keep them informed of developments in the pension environment through our highly informative biannual Newsletters and flagship publication, Pennant.

Our membership also values our work in running Roadshows and Webinars at bases around the country, where we inform and shed light on pension complexity. These events are attended at one end, by recent entrants to the Services to gain a basic understanding of their Armed Forces Pension; those at their 'mid-career' as they assess their options and those towards the latter stages of their career when they and their partners become focussed on their future financial well-being. The Society is there at every step of the way, helping them make the best pension choices.

"if the Society didn't exist we'd have to invent it."

We are a self-sufficient, independent organisation, sustained by our Members' subscriptions, free to criticise whenever we find injustice in the system, and to campaign not only on behalf of our Members, but for the wider Armed Forces Community. As many have said to us over the years: "if the Society didn't exist we'd have to invent it."



CHAMPIONING
ARMED FORCES PENSIONS
SINCE 1946



Maj Gen Neil Marshall, CEO, FPS

Perhaps it's not so surprising that we retain our Members' support, year after year.

Finally, having spoken about the support we provide at critical stages of Service life there's another dimension to the Society's activities. This is our membership benefits programme which is continuously refreshed to meet the needs of our diverse membership. It provides access to products and services (often exclusive to us and usually discounted) ranging from durables (washing machines to cars), insurances (family travel policies to pets), professional services (legal, tax and inheritance planning experts and so on), discounted money transfers, cruises and much more. It's our way of ensuring our Members get even greater value from their membership subscription.

On reflection, perhaps it's not so surprising that we retain our Members' support, year after year.

We continue to grow strongly, heading steadily toward 70,000 Members.

Find out how you can
join us by visiting

www.forcespensionsociety.org

Scan for Website





Success at the 28th Army Inter Corps Cross Country Championships, contested over the infamous Bulford Ridge, concluded an excellent season of cross-country for the Royal Regiment. After a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic, the Regiments and Corps of the British Army were once again ready to battle for honours; the Championships were well attended, with every Regiment or Corps represented bar the Royal Army Chaplains Corps.

The Gunners had an outstanding day – the male team conquered all opposition and were declared champions; the female team finished runners up, to the Army athlete laden Army Medical Services and the male under 23 team placed a creditable fourth. It wasn't just the Gunner teams on the podium, there was also individual glory – Lt G Thomas RA (47 Regt RA) was the male individual runner up, Capt R Wild RHA (7 PARA RHA) matched this feat in the female race and LBdr G Ramsbottom (5 Regt RA) went one better and was crowned the female U23 Champion.

Although the teams' performances were superb and should rightly be lauded, it was anticipated, nonetheless. The Gunners dominated at the Army Championships, earlier in the season. In the male race 5 Regt RA were crowned Army champions, with 7 PARA RHA close runners up. 5 Regt RA also climbed the top step of the podium in the female race, achieving an unparalleled double. Our athletes were again on the podium – Lt G Thomas RA and Capt R Wild RHA both won bronze medals and LBdr Ramsbottom was once more, the female U23 Champion, continuing a fine season, which saw them crowned Gunner champions in their respective categories. Our athletes' fine performances earned no less than four call ups, to represent the Army at the auspicious Inter Service Championships and as always, the athletes competing were a credit to the Regiment.

by WO2 (SMIG) Byrne
Young Officers' Branch



Date	Event	Location
2022		
20-22 May	RA Assembly	Blackpool
21 May	RAA AGM	Blackpool
21 May	RAA NEC Meeting	Blackpool
9 Jun	Founders Day	Royal Hospital Chelsea
16 Jun	Hail & Farewell	Larkhill
02 Jul	RA Service of Remembrance	NMA
8 Sep	Sunset Ceremony	Larkhill
13 Oct	Awards Dinner	Larkhill
20 Oct	Central Sgts' Mess Dinner	Larkhill
21 Oct	RA Alamein Dinner	Larkhill
10 Nov	Field of Remembrance	Westminster
13 Nov	RA Ceremony of Remembrance	Hyde Park
04 Dec	St Barbara's Day	Larkhill
2023		
16 Feb	RA Gold Cup	Sandown Park
16 Mar	RAA NEC Meeting	Larkhill
12-14 May	RA Assembly	Blackpool
13 May	RAA NEC Meeting	Blackpool
1 Jul	RA Service of Remembrance	NMA
4 Oct	RAA NEC Meeting	Larkhill
9 Nov	Field of Remembrance	Westminster Abbey
12 Nov	RA Ceremony of Remembrance	Hyde Park Corner
3 Dec	St Barbara's Day	Larkhill Garrison Church



Farewell to Allan Solly as RAA Secretary



It is with great sadness that we prepare to say farewell to Allan Solly who has been an outstanding Secretary of the Royal Artillery Association for nearly 20 years. Allan joined the Junior Leaders Regiment Royal Artillery in 1967 and on Mustering was posted to 45th Regiment, where he served for the next 19 years, culminating in his appointment as BSM 94 (New Zealand Battery). His time at 45 Regiment was interspersed with postings as a recruiting Sergeant in Bradford and as a WO2 Troop Commander back at JLRRA. Following an extra-regimental posting as WO1, he was commissioned in 1991 and posted to 4th Regiment as BK 29 (Coruna) Battery.

In late 1993 he retired from regular service under "Options for Change".

He joined his local branch of the RAA shortly after retiring and has remained with it ever since and where he is now serving as the Chairman of the East Kent Branch.

Allan joined the RAA as Membership Secretary in September 2003 in Woolwich. Apart from a short break when HQ DRA and RHQRA relocated to Larkhill, he has been in post since then, latterly taking on wider responsibilities as RAA Secretary.

It was during his time in Bradford that Allan met Cath. Following their marriage, Cath 'served' for 13 years as an army wife and has subsequently continued to provide unstinting support to Allan and the Association through her involvement in helping run both Branch and national events over the last 19 years.

We owe a huge debt of gratitude to Allan for all that he has done for the RAA and the Regimental Family. We will say a formal thank you and farewell to Allan and Cath at the Royal Artillery Assembly in Blackpool, but I am sure you will join Brigadier

Mark Pountain, as RAA Chairman, and me, as Regimental Secretary, in thanking Allan and Cath for their enormous contribution over the last 19 years and wishing them all the very best for the future.

Col Matthew Carter
Regt Sec

RA Assembly

The pandemic has postponed two years of this annual event but we warmly welcome back the Royal Artillery Assembly in 2022 and hope this year we can encourage you to attend this prestigious event. In previous years the support from RAA Branches, Regiments and families has been excellent and it is important that this trend is maintained to ensure the lasting bond between our serving and veteran community. All serving Gunners and veterans are welcome to attend.

We hope that 2022 will be a great celebration and we look forward to seeing you there. To book, please follow the instructions on the information below. Please also complete the RAA Booking Return, contact Cas.Thoburn603@mod.gov.uk



Royal Artillery Service of Remembrance

The Royal Artillery Association will conduct the Royal Artillery Service of Remembrance at the National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas on Saturday 2nd July 2022 commencing at 1100 hrs. All members of the Royal Regiment of Artillery and their families are welcome to attend. Please find the details of the event www.thegunners.org.uk/events

BOOK EARLY
TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT

WELCOME BACK

The Royal Artillery Assembly

FRIDAY 20TH - MONDAY 23RD MAY 2022
AT THE NORBRECK CASTLE HOTEL



For what will be one of the largest social gatherings of Gunners, a truly memorable weekend. Enjoy a spectacular programme of entertainment, including dancing to Live Bands, Fantastic Production Shows and International Cabarets. All appearing at the Royal Artillery Grand Gala Dinner Night.

3 Night Package inclusive of Dinner, Bed & Breakfast

(Including RA Grand Gala Dinner - Saturday 21st May) - Just **£152 Per Person**

2 Night Package inclusive of Dinner, Bed & Breakfast

(Including RA Grand Gala Dinner - Saturday 21st May) - Just **£126 Per Person**

Grand Gala Dinner Only - No Accommodation **£25 Per Person**

FRIDAY

- Check in from 3pm
- 3 Course Carvery Dinner
- Entertainment

SATURDAY

- Full English Breakfast
- Annual Assembly
- Standard Bearers Competition
- Sunset Ceremony
- Civic Reception
- Gala Dinner
- Live Entertainment

SUNDAY

- Full English Breakfast
- Church Service
- Themed Buffet
- Entertainment

To book a Gala Inclusive Package - call **0871 222 0031** and quote **RAANB0522**
Calls cost 13p per minute plus your chosen phone company access charge.

A refundable deposit of **£30** per person is required when booking Gala Inclusive Packages.
Please remember to advise the reservationist of your branch when booking.

For Gala Dinner Only bookings - please call **01253 352 341**

Accommodation reservations cannot be made on this line (01253 352 341)

PLEASE NOTE PARKING CHARGES APPLY - £3 FOR 24HRS PARKING FOR RESIDENTIAL GUESTS ONLY

Norbreck Castle Hotel, Queens Promenade, Blackpool, FY2 9AA. www.britanniahotels.com



Carlisle Branch

The recently elected North West Regional Representative, Mr Jerry Mistry recently visited Carlisle Branch to present the Caterham Cup for 2020. The Caterham Cup is awarded to the runners up for the Artillery House Cup raising money for the Royal Artillery Charities. Carlisle Branch were joint winners with Plymouth Branch in 2020.



Shoeburyness and South Essex Branch

The Branch President, Captain Barry Exley presented Ken Wilson with a bespoke glass presentation piece for his outstanding service as the Branch Standard Bearer. Ken who is now in his 84th year is making way for the youngsters to take over the role. Thank you for your service to the Branch, you have been an absolute star.

Mrs Lana Balmer also visited the Branch to present them with a Certificate from the RBL for their efforts during last years collection for the Poppy Appeal.

Newport Branch

The outgoing Treasurer, Gareth Griffiths is presented with a RAA Certificate of Appreciation for his sterling work over the last seven years. Thank you Griff for your hard work and keeping the Branch accounts in order, it is very much appreciated. On 20th October 2022 Newport Branch celebrates their Centenary, they have commissioned a commemorative plate that will be presented to Branch Members.



Menin Gate Memorial, Ypres

John Edwards, RAA Bolton Branch Standard Bearer was on a recent trip to Belgium and joined Bjorn Hindryckx, RAA Standard Bearer, Ypres. They paraded the Standards at the Menin Gate Memorial at 8pm, whilst buglers from the Last Post Association played the Last Post.



The King's Troop RHA

Thank you to Gunner Millie James who organised a charity raffle for the Baxter Ball, held on Monday 28th February at The King's Troop RHA and raised an amazing £1,301.14.

Millie visited RHQ to handover the cheque and explained that members of the Troop handmade the gifts that were auctioned to family and friends – so much talent, skill and thought went into these gifts. The money raised will go towards helping Gunners in need, your donation is very much valued and appreciated.



Wycombe & District Branch

On behalf of the trustees and beneficiaries, please accept our grateful thanks to all those members of the Wycombe and District Branch who took part in the collection for the RACF at the Royal Artillery Gold Cup on Thursday 17th February.



You will be pleased to know that the total collected was £1,209.69. This is the highest figure achieved over the last four Gold Cup race days.

Donations such as this enable us to continue to support individual serving and retired members of the Royal Regiment of Artillery, and their families, who are in need, as well as supporting the serving Regiment with grants to support welfare and comradeship.

Once again many thanks for your support.



PROMOTING THE RACF

On Wednesday 13th April as part of her Fundraising to attend the World Scout Jamboree in South Korea in 2023 Summer-Jade (along with her father, WO2 Michael Webber who is the current RABSM) undertook a sponsored trip to the summit of Mount Snowdon. They decided on taking the Pyg Track up and the Llanberis path down. In total it took a little under 5 hours, which is a very respectable time for a 13 year old!

Whilst on the mountain Summer-Jade took the opportunity to advertise the Royal Artillery Charitable Fund, this in itself generated a lot of conversation between others on the mountain.

Summer-Jade has to raise a total of £4,000 to attend the jamboree and has been working tirelessly all year on various events to raise as much as she can. If anybody would like to support her in this event then please see the details below.

https://www.gofundme.com/f/summerjades-scout-jamboree-fundraiser?utm_source=customer&utm_medium=copy_link_all&utm_campaign=p_cp+share-sheet



Falklands 40

In 2022 we mark the 40th anniversary of the end of the Falklands Conflict. The Royal British Legion will be commemorating this important milestone with a special event held at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire on Tuesday 14th June. Falklands 40 will recognise the service of the 30,000 sailors, marines, soldiers, airmen and merchant mariners who served in the Falklands War, along with the many civilians who supported the Task Force and remember the sacrifice of those 255 British personnel who lost their lives.

Doors will open at the NMA from 0900 with the central Act of Remembrance Service taking place at 1330.

Veterans of the Falklands Conflict, their families and participating civilian organisations are invited to attend the event.

All those wishing to attend must register through their appropriate association, this is a ticketed event. Registration is now open and if you wish to attend please email the Royal Artillery Association – Cas.thoburn603@mod.gov.uk

E-tickets will be issued to individuals closer to the event.





Gunner Sunday

On Sunday 24th April the regimental family returned to the Royal Hospital Chelsea for Gunner Sunday, spending the day with the In-Pensioners. A large gathering of serving, veterans and their families attended the Service at the Royal Hospital.

The Royal Artillery Standard Bearers joined the In-Pensioners on parade where they were inspected by Governor of the Royal Hospital Chelsea, General Sir Adrian Bradshaw KCB OBE DL, Regimental Colonel, Colonel Sam Shepherd MBE ADC and Royal Artillery Sergeant Major, WO1 (RASM) R Mealand. After the parade, the Standard Bearers and regimental family joined the In Pensioners in the Chapel for Choral Matins. Following the service, a curry lunch was held at the In-Pensioners Club.

We are very fortunate to be invited to join the residents of the Royal Hospital on this special occasion and we always receive a tremendous welcome. Thank you to everyone who travelled to attend this special event and we look forward to welcoming you to Gunner Sunday on 16th April 2023. If you are Gunner, past or present, then Gunner Sunday is an opportunity to visit this very special residence.



RACF SUPPORT TO THE REGIMENTAL FAMILY

In 2021 the RACF provided £545,277 in individual grants to 1032 serving Gunners, veterans and families.

So far this year the RACF Welfare team have awarded £193,168 in grants to 242 members of our Royal Artillery regimental family. We have awarded £174,391 to our veterans and their dependants and the remaining £18,777 to 21 serving Gunners and their dependants. The largest area of support so far this year has been with annual grants to our more senior veterans, those who have reached state pensionable age and are struggling with day to day living costs. We have awarded £35,064 to help those who needed new household goods, £30,084 to those who needed our help to fund mobility aids, sadly £12,184 in bereavement grants and £10,555 to those who were in arrears with household bills such as rent and energy bills. We anticipate many will struggle to find the extra money to pay the increased charges for gas, electric and oil.

If you are struggling or know another Gunner, whether that be veteran or serving and they need some financial support with something that they need please ask us for help. We are there for all our regimental family members.

Call SSAFA on 0800 731 4880, the Royal British Legion on 0808 802 8080 or contact us on either 0300 167 3998 or 0300 158 7035.

We can be contacted by email: RARHQ-RACF-WELFARE-MAILBOX@mod.gov.uk

Please don't hesitate RA Charitable Fund Application - RA Association (thegunners.org.uk)



Op COURAGE: the Veterans Mental Health and Wellbeing Service

Op COURAGE is an NHS mental health specialist service designed to help serving personnel due to leave the military, reservists, armed forces veterans and their families.

How Op COURAGE can help

Op COURAGE can help you and your family with a range of support and treatment, including:

- supporting you with intensive emergency care and treatment if you're in a crisis
- helping you transition from military to civilian life by providing mental health care with Defence Medical Services (DMS)
- supporting armed forces families affected by mental health problems, including helping you access local services
- helping you recognise and treat early signs of mental health problems as well as more advanced mental health conditions and psychological trauma
- helping you to access other NHS mental health services if you need them, such as finding an NHS psychological therapies service (IAPT) and eating disorder services
- helping you get in touch with charities and local organisations who can support your wider health and wellbeing needs, such as housing, relationships, finances, employment, drug and alcohol misuse and social support

Who will I speak to?

Everyone at Op COURAGE is either from the armed forces community or is experienced in working with serving personnel, reservists, veterans and their families.

They understand military life and the courage it takes to speak with someone. They will work with you to make sure you get the right type of specialist care, support and treatment.

Who Op COURAGE can help?

To receive help and support from Op COURAGE, you must:

- be a resident in England and have served in the UK armed forces for a full day
- be registered with a GP practice in England or be willing and eligible to register with a GP
- provide your military service number

It does not matter how long ago you left the armed forces. You can contact Op COURAGE even if you left many years ago.

You can also contact Op COURAGE if you are still serving but have a discharge date.

Further details are at: Mental health support for veterans, service leavers and reservists - NHS (www.nhs.uk)





CELEBRATIONS

DIAMOND WEDDING
ANNIVERSARY

On 9th June 1962 in St Mary's Church, Pembroke Dock, Ruth Elizabeth Dony to Peter John Buckle, 22 Regt RA.

Congratulations Ernest & Josephine Marchant on your 60th (Diamond) Wedding Anniversary. 21st April 1962-2022

INFORMATION

GUNNER 'ZIG ZAG' SPORTS

BLAZERS AND BOATING JACKETS
Many of you would have seen the success of the first run of 30 of the new Gunner Sports Blazers. There is still sufficient cloth for a further 12-15 blazers to be made. They are made to measure by Club Colours Ltd in Suffolk, with cloth from an English mill. Cost is approximately £220 each and they take about 4 weeks to make. If you are interested, please contact Mr Alan Middle 01473 231378 or 07801798508 or visit the website at www.clubcolours.co.uk

BESPOKE WALKING STICKS

Mr David Roberts – King's Troop RHA Veteran who suffers with PTSD and has done for many years has been making bespoke walking sticks to assist with his symptoms. David has made them for fellow service Veterans and also many celebrities including Philip Schofield, Sir Michael Palin, Martin Clunes and Bear Grylls. If you would be interested in owning your own personalised stick – please contact David on Tel 01646 279716, or email droberts8641@gmail.com

REUNIONS

ROYAL ARTILLERY BOYS AND
JUNIOR LEADERS' ASSOCIATION
REUNION

Following the very successful 30th reunion in Oct 21, the organising committee has already confirmed a booking for next year's reunion. It will be over the weekend 22 Oct 22. Booking details and Gala Dinner menu will be published in the January edition of "Trumpeter" which is issued to all subscribed members. If you wish to be included and are not a member of the Association, please contact the Secretary Ted McKenzie by email exboysra.tm@gmail.com or call 07900 806235.

SCOTTISH GUNNERS REUNION
DINNER

Regrettably, the Scottish Gunner Reunion Dinner cancelled due to continuing social restrictions in Ministry of Defence establishments. We plan to hold the next Reunion Dinner in the autumn of 2022 placing us back on our normal biennial schedule. We will seek to inform you all of the revised date as soon as we can. If any former Highland, Lowland or Scottish Gunners wish to register their interest for 2022, please email Capt Abbie Lawrence, the Dinner Secretary, on scottishgunnerreunion@gmail.com. The facebook page will also remain open, so please stay connected.

RMAS SMC 28 REUNION - 2022

(Passing Out April 1982)

James Archibald (11 Pl, Salerno Coy, SMC 28) is trying to make contact with all Gunners from SMC 28. If applicable (or you know someone who would be) please email contact details and mobile number to jlarchibald@icloud.com. Specifically looking for DM Cullen, RA Dare, CJ Mason, GAR Masters, PD Robinson, AM Smith, RP Warren, Tony Faith (DS), Jamie Marment (DS), Tony Faith.

HAIL & FAREWELL

The next Hail and Farewell will be held at the RA Mess on 16 Jun 22. In addition to those new LE officers being dined in, all those officers retiring, but not serving at Regimental Duty, after a pensionable engagement, are welcome to attend, with partner, as guests of the Regiment. Please note that this includes those that are leaving up until Dec 22. The dress for the event is Black Tie. Timing 1900 for 1930. Subject to numbers you are welcome to invite additional guests at your expense. If you would like to attend please contact Mrs Emma Pagan-Skelley - emm.pagan-skelley100@mod.gov.uk or Tel 0300 155 6172

20 REGT RA 2022 REUNION

We will be holding our Reunion at the Holiday Inn Coventry on the weekend of 19th/20th August. General catch up on Friday evening followed by a formal dinner on Saturday. All former members of the Regiment and those attached at anytime are welcome to attend. For details, please email reunion.20regt@gmail.com or call/message David McDaid 07747 478179.

CALLING ALL COMMAND
GUNNER OFFICERS!

The Commanding Officer and Officers of 29 Commando Regiment Royal Artillery request the pleasure of your company at The Commando Gunner Officer Reunion Dinner to be held at The Royal Citadel, Plymouth on 13 May 2022. Black Tie, Medals, Carriages 0130. RSVP to Ops Officer 148 Meiktila Cdo FO Bty william.farquhar100@mod.gov.uk

EXERCISE ONE WAY - G BATTERY
- BAHRAIN TO UK 1966

In connection with the above, which included Ian Fowler and Alex Harley, would like to contact Chris Thomson and Mick Savage of G Para Bty (Mercer's Troop), part of 1 Para Group Bahrain/South Arabia in 1965/66. Please contact alex.h@btinternet.com

SCOTTISH GUNNERS REUNION
DINNER

19 Regt RA will host the Scottish Gunner Reunion Dinner for serving and retired officers of both 19 Regt RA and 40 Regt RA in the Campbell VC Officers' Mess in Purvis Lines, Larkhill on Fri 23 Sep 22. Just as in previous years, this reunion will be for all members and generations of the Scottish Gunner officer family. This year's reunion should be seen as a perfect opportunity to get back together and celebrate a decade on the re-designation of both Highland and Lowland Gunners into The Scottish Gunners. Invitations will be sent throughout May and updates will be posted on our facebook page at "Scottish Gunners Reunion". If you wish to express your interest (and please do), double-check you are already on our mailing list or provide us with your details for the first time, please contact the reunion dinner secretary (preferably by email) Capt Abbie Lawrence on scottishgunnerreunion@gmail.com



Save The Date

14-15 May 22

THE 60th ANNIVERSARY OF THE COMMANDO GUNNERS

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FAMILIES DAY
MILITARY DISPLAYS
FOOD & DRINK
ALL RANKS REUNION
CHURCH SERVICE**

The Royal Citadel, Plymouth, PL1 2PD



Commando Gunner 60
Since 1962
United we Conquer!





LAST POST

Notification of Death:

Nicholas John Adams 5 November 2021

Mr Jimmy Ellis March 2022

Mary Clarke "Molly" 5 March 2022

Michael John Hopkins 16 March 2022

Brig David Creswell 22 March 2022

Lt Col Tim Simpson 30 March 2022

COOPER - Elsley Henry Cooper (Bo) passed away 1 January 2022, aged 96. Bo saw active service in Norway, Palestine and with the British Army of the Rhine during World War II, as an airborne gunner. He did his parachute training at Ringway, Manchester and was posted to a Forward Observer Unit. Basic training was on Salisbury Plain (where his father also trained during World War I). Two of their shared memories were having to walk back to barracks in the dark from Salisbury, and practising range-finding using Stonehenge as a target, and approaching sight of this monument. Bo was born in New Zealand and then spent the last 10 years of his life in Sydney, New South Wales before the family returned to London permanently. This experience plus continued contact with his wider family members living in Canada and the USA gave him an interest in current affairs at home and abroad, and a willingness to travel to see the world. Bo was well read but also very practical; like many men of his generation he would attempt most jobs that needed to be done at home. His cheeriness is sadly missed by all his family.

ELLIOT - Col (Hon Brig) Richard Gilbert Elliot OBE. Dick passed away 8 September 2021 aged 88. He followed his father into the Regiment, enlisting in 1952, and was

commissioned from Sandhurst in 1954. He retired after 33 years, during which time he commanded a battalion of the Ulster Defence Regiment. For many years Dick was Secretary to the Nuffield Trust (Forces) which allowed him to work largely from home and allow ample time for him to pursue his interest in sailing. Having retired to Shrewton on The Plain and within sound of the guns, Dick launched himself into many village activities including village hall committee, British Legion, Horticultural Society, Shrewton Silver Band and several other local enterprises where his enthusiasm and shrewd advice was so much appreciated. His wife Lyn predeceased him and he leaves two daughters, Jane and Penny and four grandchildren and his dog Peppa who was with him at the end. Further info - Lt Col (Retd) Keith Wilby k817@btinternet.com

EYRES - Capt Christian, suddenly died unexpectedly on 3 March 2022, aged 58. He served in 94 Loc Regt RA and 26 Fd Regt RA. Loving husband and proud father of four.

TURNER - Gnr Raymond (Ray) Maurice Turner, served in C Battery, 3rd Regiment Royal Horse Artillery in Germany (Detmold), Colchester and Northern Ireland. Died 28 November 2021. Much loved and missed by family and friends.

WILLDEN - Sgt Trevor G Willden. Died at 8 am on Sunday 27 March 2022. He was born in January 1951 in Nuneaton, Warwickshire, his Mother's maiden name is Batt. Trevor had been suffering for many years with bone cancer. He served in Dragon Troop, in Hildesheim BAOR and the Light Artillery in Bulford. After 22 years, he demobbed as a Sergeant.

RA Historical Society Spring 2022 Programme

Date and Timings	Type of Event	Subject	Lecturer/Lead	Registrations Close	Cost per Head
16-20 May	RAHS Battlefield Tour 2022	The English Civil War Part Two	Maj Nigel Daniel		
Wed 15 June 1930 hrs	Online Webinar	Gunnery in the Malayan Emergency 1948-1960	Dr Robert Lyman	Sun 12 Jun	Free
Wed 6 July	Summer Visit	Shoeburyness - MOD Ranges and Museum	Lt Col Peter Thompson	Wed 22 Jun	To be notified
Fri 21 October	Shrapnel Lectures: Four lectures with buffet lunch at Larkhill	Russia and Ukraine: Historic, current artillery and urban lessons	Lt Col Peter Thompson	Fri 7 Oct	To be notified

Open to all Gunners

To register please email the RAHS Secretary by the dates shown Zoom Log In details will be emailed to all who register for webinars Email Lt Col Clayton, RAHS Secretary: richard.clayton312@gmail.com



WO1 (RSM) W (Wally) Pearson



Wally Pearson, who died on 16th January 2022 aged 93, joined the Army as a National Serviceman in 1947. On completing the mandatory 18 months and having been promoted to Lance Bombardier, he returned to civilian life. After a short spell in 'Civvy Street' Wally re-joined the Regiment in 1949. After the necessary documentation and re-issuing of uniforms at the RA Depot, Woolwich, Wally was posted to 71st Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment RA. By 1954 he was in the Canal Zone and had been promoted to Sgt and No 1 of the 3.7inch HAA gun. It was at this time that he was selected for service in the RHA. Wally was subsequently posted to the 3rd Regt RHA, who were also in the Suez Canal Zone, as a No 1 in 'D' Battery. He remained

with 3rd for several years, serving later in BAOR as a No1 and Troop Sergeant Major.

In 1961 Wally was selected for promotion to BSM and posted to 'A' Battery (The Chestnut Troop) of 1st RHA. Whilst with the Chestnut Troop his Battery Commander was Major Martin Farndale, who later went on to command 1st Regt and also became, in time, C in C BAOR, Commander NORTHAG and subsequently Master Gunner St James's Park. A painting was commissioned by the Chestnut Troop in 1964 of the Battery on exercise in a 'Hide' area near Hildesheim, West Germany. Wally and the Battery Commander are at the centre of the scene. It was painted by the famous military artist Terence Cuneo and hangs today in the Officers' Mess of 1st RHA. So, Wally and Martin Farndale have been immortalised in oils!

In 1965 Wally was selected for promotion to WO1 (RSM) and posted to the HAC in London. Shortly afterwards, on the untimely death of the Troop RSM in 1966, he was selected as the next RSM of the King's Troop RHA. Although Wally was the first non-rider to serve as RSM he took to the challenge easily and with his horse 'Tommy,' whom he rode

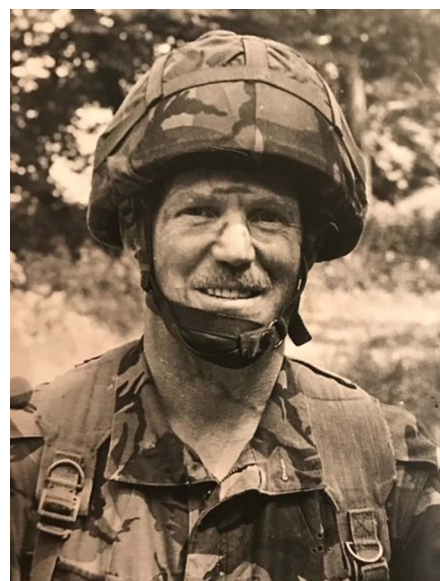
on parade as well as in show-jumping competitions, became a very competent horseman. Wally spent 6 years with the Troop, serving at both St John's Wood and Windsor during the re-build of the barracks. Indeed, Wally is the longest serving RSM in the Troop's history. Major Jasper Browell, the CO during the first 3 years of his service there, and an officer with whom Wally had served alongside in 3rd RHA, described him as 'the best Troop RSM ever'. An accolade which many who served with him would heartily agree.

Wally was an outstanding soldier and RSM. An excellent man-manager who spent many hours encouraging and instructing young soldiers and JNCOs. He always set the highest standards of turnout, conduct and professionalism. He was highly respected by all who knew him, and he will be very much missed by his many friends.





Michael Rodney Finn (Micky Finn)



Michael Rodney Finn (Micky Finn) died on 9th January 2022, at the age of 72, after a short illness, which he bore bravely.

The fifth of six children, Micky Finn was born in 1949. Following a happy childhood growing up in the Cheshire countryside around Knutsford, Mick enlisted in the British Army at the age of 18. He spent most of his service in 12 Regiment Royal Artillery and made his mark in T Battery (Shah Sujah's Troop) where he rose through every rank to become the Battery Sergeant Major. On first arriving in 12 Regiment Mick joined the Bofors 40/70 detachment of Harry Wallace who became a central figure in his career and a life-long friend, as did the other members of that small crew. With 12 Regiment converting to Rapier in 1975 Mick became a No 4 and subsequently a rapier detachment commander.

Mick completed 5 emergency tours of Northern Ireland during the 'pell-mell years', fought in the Falklands War and served in the first Gulf War as RQMS with 26 Regiment, before leaving the Colours in December 1991.

The most defining moment of his career was, however, the Falklands War in 1982 as a Staff Sergeant in G Troop T Battery, then stationed at Kirton-in-Lindsey. Just 15 minutes prior to going on Easter leave, the Battery was ordered, out of the blue, to join 3 Commando Brigade. From a standing start of being at 'no notice to move' for any type of operation let alone an amphibious one, and with none of the intrinsic resources required for such a deployment, the Battery set sail as part of the Task Force from Plymouth on LSL Sir Geraint just two days later. Mick's organisational ability, easy authority and leadership were central to achieving this seemingly impossible task and his actions during this frenetic period summed up the 'can do' attitude that pervaded Britain's Armed Forces at the time.

Landing on D Day (21 May) into the teeth of sustained Argentine air attacks, and flown into the wrong location, it took another day, which was thankfully fog-bound, to reorganise the rapier detachments of G Troop around Port San Carlos. Mick continued to coordinate the movement, resupply and repair of his detachments throughout the duration of the war. Following the cessation of hostilities, and having handed over to the RAF Regiment, Mick and G Troop moved to Stanley where they became responsible for guarding Prisoners of War, including the Argentine Military Governor Brigadier-General Menéndez, onboard the MV St Edmund.

In 2017, and marking 35 years since the Falklands War, Mick organised T Battery veterans to march at the Cenotaph Remembrance Day Parade. This not only rekindled old

friendships, it also sowed the seeds for a return visit to the Falklands in 2019.

Following his military career Mick joined the Royal College of Physicians where he held the ancient position of Bedell for 23 years. Whilst the Bedell is central to the ceremonial life of the Royal College, which entailed Mick carrying the Mace in procession with the President, he was also responsible for all key operational aspects of Facilities Management and Security. That Mick performed these divergent duties with aplomb was testament to his military training and his coolness under pressure. He was held in huge regard, which resulted in him being awarded the President's Medal. Generally only awarded to prominent and distinguished medical practitioners, Mick is one of only two non-medical personnel to have achieved such distinction.

Mick was a sportsman of renown; he played and coached both rugby and squash. He also boxed and subsequently trained others in this sport. He remained a very fit man through his life and was running regularly through the Herefordshire countryside, in his retirement, until becoming ill in the summer of 2021. Mick also had a wonderful sense of humour and was quick with puns - of course he was - it came with his name.

Beloved husband of Margaret, much loved father, grandfather and great grandfather, he will be greatly missed. A funeral and celebration of his life was held on 7th February 2022 in Hereford and was well attended by many friends and family.

Micky Finn, one of the good guys, we salute you.



Lieutenant Colonel R K Sampson OBE



Reginald Keith Sampson, known to everybody as Reg, was born on 19 June 1935 in Winchester, where his father was an accountant. He had a happy childhood and after a period in the war as an evacuee in Lancashire, he attended Peter Symonds School, Winchester, where he excelled at maths.

He duly passed the RCB and after eighteen months at RMA Sandhurst, he was commissioned into the Royal Artillery. Following his YO's course, was posted to a Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment in Pembroke Dock, but following the unexpected release of IRA prisoners from the Curragh, the regiment was sent to Fermanagh in the infantry role.

A tour in 17 Training Regiment at Oswestry followed, and here he met Myffy. They were married on 2 November 1963 and were happily married for fifty eight years. While serving here, Reg passed the flying aptitude tests and then became a helicopter pilot, spending three years flying with the army.

Probably his most significant posting was to 42 Medium Regiment, based in an old hutted camp on the outskirts of Devizes

and it was in this regiment that he and Myffy made many lasting friendships which still exist today.

Following a tour in Northern Ireland, the regiment moved to Fallingbowl and by this time Reg had been promoted to Major and was commanding 18 Battery, under the charismatic Jasper Browell.

A further Northern Ireland tour followed a period of BAOR soldiering, when their training on the larger calibre guns reached a high state of proficiency. They were based in the Grand Central Hotel in central Belfast and 18 Battery area of operations was the Markets and immediate surroundings which was a hotbed of IRA activity. The battery performed exceptionally well under Reg's leadership and he was rewarded with a thoroughly well deserved MBE.

The Regimental Intelligence Officer for the tour, Eric Dunlop, had this to say about Reg: "It is absolutely no exaggeration when I say that Reg was the most outstanding regimental officer I have ever met. He combined quiet authority with calmness, humour and an ability to analyse and react to a situation quickly and accurately, all this without displaying the need, shown by many of his contemporaries, to broadcast their "achievements".

One of his most memorable postings was to Helsinki, as the British Defence Attaché, where he carried out his activities with distinction and was advanced to OBE. While there, he and Myffy were the only British married couple to have completed the Finnlandia 75 kilometre marathon on cross country skis.

On retiring from the Army in 1990 he worked in London as an RO looking after every aspect of

the lives of Foreign Attachés, a job for which he was particularly suited and which he relished.

He retired fully at the age of 65 and went to live at their cottage in Manningford Abbots, while Myffy continued to work at the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital for another five years, commuting daily by train.

He was first and foremost a family man, he adored Myffy and was incredibly proud of their two beautiful and talented daughters and of his splendid grandchildren with whom he greatly enjoyed spending time.

Reg was a kind and compassionate man with a wonderful sense of humour. He loved fishing, he was a keen and proficient gardener and he enjoyed game shooting with the Larkhill Shoot, until he had to give it up when he started missing more birds than he hit.

For about twenty years he was a Paddock Steward on the Larkhill Racecourse where his calm diplomacy was a great asset when dealing with anxious and difficult owners and trainers. In the paddock, he was, as with on every other occasion, always immaculately dressed.

He was a member of the Parish Council for over twenty years and was the Planning Officer for the village, tasks that he carried out with quiet skill and care and which were very much appreciated by local residents.

He was laid to rest in the churchyard at Manningford Abbots after a lovely, very traditional funeral service in the packed small church. One of his peers said of him: "Surely he was one of the most outstanding Gunner Officers of our generation."



Maj (Retd) David Boyle



This week we have been shared the sad news of the passing of David (Davy) Boyle (Maj Retd - Royal Artillery). Our first thoughts go out to Mary, his daughter Karen, his grandchildren and family. They have lost their husband, father, grandad and family member, we have collectively lost a great friend who will go down in Regimental history as a true legend.

Davy was a man who defined his own life best, personal, even private, but there for you when you needed him to be. Be under no illusion, Davy was a fierce competitor who wanted nothing but the best for his soldiers and the officers he mentored and advised; even if he got it on the football pitch by other means! Davy was a great sportsman and professional soldier. The words that his friends across the Regiment are sharing say it all about Davy – fairness, respected, valued, colleague, true soldier, a

true gentleman, Davy's legend will live on. How true this is and the thoughts will remain with us when we raise a glass to him.

Davy had a desire and determination to succeed, he did this with style, the highest of standards, drive, fairness and dedication. As a BK he once shared with those present at the O Group, "that the difference between who you are and who you want to be is determined by you alone in what you do - think about it and soot it oot". Never a truer word spoken BK Sir.

We know many people took these wise and choice words with them to determine their own career paths. But Davy was not content to stop his determination to guide others after he left the Army, he continued this after his life as a soldier and he never let his standards or advice to others slip. Just last Year he was heard guiding others with his advice, which was met with true admiration of what was being said. He would never let go of his commitment to helping and supporting others, he never forgot who his friends were and how he only ever wanted them to succeed in all they wanted to do.

In the week before Davy's passing, without a thought for himself, he held his head high and aimed to hold on, never allowing his personal pain to show to those who were around him and who knew him best. He was without a doubt a strong and determined man who we all love in our own way.

Graham (Scouse) Markham was close to Davy and supported him from close in the past months. Davy (being private) was heard to be making jokey comments about this relationship even towards the end. Graham in his own style responded accordingly and it was met with the same admiration of being treated as though he was getting on with things. It is friends like this that keep us together and are the link to us supporting from afar.

There have been many good men that we, the Royal Regiment of Artillery have lost, Davy is very high up on that list. In closing and in the words of one of his colleagues – Davy is a fine man who shaped many of us young men into what we are today, dedicating towards others over himself. Dave is a symbol of strength, commitment, determination, fairness and respect, he is and will remain a legend to us all.

To Mary and all your family, we are here for you at this time of need and our condolences go out to you all.

Stand Easy Major David Boyle Royal Artillery.



Brig D H Hodge OBE DL



David Hendry Hodge was born in 1933 on the Isle of Arran, off the west coast of Scotland, where he spent the first ten years of his life before school on the mainland at Dollar Academy. His father, the agent for the Elder-Dempster Shipping Line in West Africa, returned annually with his mother to see David and the family until the outbreak of war in 1939 when David's mother then remained on Arran.

National Service followed school and David, briefly, became Sapper Hodge before four months at Mons and then Sandhurst where he set ambitious standards passing out as a Senior Under Officer and gaining a commission in the Royal Artillery. He represented the Academy at rugby, football and golf and also won the Benson Memorial Prize for the most deserving Gunner cadet on the grounds of efficiency and character. David's first posting was to 15 Medium Regiment in Hong Kong.

It was here that David met his future wife Anne whose father, commanding the 1st Battalion, the Kings Own Royal Regiment, had commanded a Chindit column during the war. Returning to UK with her parents in 1956, she and David were engaged in 1958 and married in July in the Sandhurst Chapel.

David's career began to take shape as a young Horse Artillery officer on posting to 5RHA in Wales. A colleague wrote: "Even then, a super-active captain and clearly a rising star"; but it was also clear that fun was important to him, and so it was throughout his career.

David remained with 5RHA which became 5th Field Regiment on moving to Hong Kong and over the next three years he and Anne happily reconnected with their history on the island. Fiona, their daughter, was born in 1961, just before their tour ended, David being posted as an instructor to Sandhurst. Alasdair, their son, arrived in 1964 and David went on to the Staff College for the 1965 Course.

As a major David's first staff appointment was at HQ 1st Division in Germany after which he moved to Detmold, back to his beloved Horse Artillery, to command D Battery in 3RHA. In 1971 David moved briefly to MOD from where he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel to head up Tactics Wing at Larkhill.

Having served as a captain in 5RHA and then commanded D Bty in 3RHA he was an intensely proud Horse Gunner. Graduating to command 5th in 1974 could have been the perfect 'home run' had 5th, much to his disappointment, not lost its 'Horse' identity and was now called a Heavy Regiment! His first task was to ensure that, throughout the Army, his Regiment was recognised as '5th Regiment' and emphatically NOT '5 Heavy' - and so it was!

5th became synonymous with proficiency and fun throughout David's time as CO. Both mess and patch life in Hildesheim were widely recognised as about as good as it got, with many officers and soldiers speaking highly of David's unfailing professional interest and sensitive guidance during his time in command; undoubtedly one of the highlights of his career. There was no longer anything 'heavy' about 'The Hildesheim Regiment'!

The regimental tie is interesting. 3RHA and D Bty both had instantly recognisable ties, 5th did not - so David designed one, now easily spotted in military circles, although some would say that it's simply mistaken for the MCC! He used the colours of the Bengal, Bombay, and Madras Horse Artillery,

from the origins of the three batteries of 5th, arranged with 'reverse' stripes, top right to bottom left. This, he claimed, was needed so that, when using his stock pin, the lie of the pin did not cross the stripes but rather lay parallel with them!


Promotion to Colonel soon followed to head up AG6, arranging Gunner Officers' postings, for which he was a natural. In 1978 came command of 21st Artillery Group and Woolwich Garrison as a brigadier; a former colleague saying: "his sheer ability and grasp of the essentials was outstanding- and yet he never let one know how superior he was!".

His final appointment in uniform was at NATO headquarters as Chief of Staff and Deputy UK Military Representative to a British Admiral. In this military/diplomatic post, the Admiral is reported to have greatly respected him as "an excellent deputy, a wise and able counsellor, and a man of influence". David retired from the Army in 1983 and was appointed by The Master Gunner as the first Honorary Regimental Colonel of 5th Regiment, of which he was particularly proud. He and Anne moved to Durham where he became Secretary to the North of England Territorial and Volunteer Reserve Association – a prestigious appointment which brought him a Deputy Lieutenancy of the county. He was appointed OBE in the 1997 New Year's Honours List.

Retiring fully in 1996, they moved to Camberley where David was able to indulge his horticultural interests, play golf, try to catch trout, and spend time watching rugby at Twickenham. He also became an accomplished artist, one of his paintings winning acclaim in the Army painting competition. Sadly, Anne predeceased him in 2017.

A consummate professional, a gentleman, a loyal, interesting, and fun companion, David will be much missed by his many friends and colleagues, both military and civilian.

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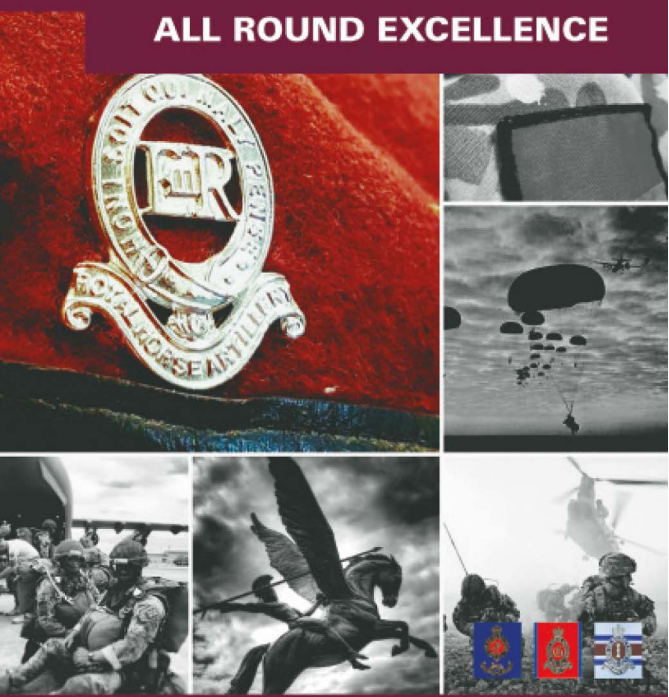
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Mike Watson

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- Acts of Gunner gallantry.

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